

EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Petersburg, VA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

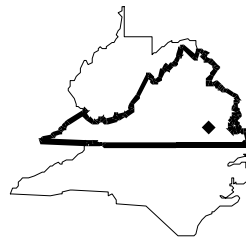
EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Petersburg for a Brownfields Pilot. The City of Petersburg, population 38,386, was founded in 1748 because it was one of the points furthest west along the James River that ocean vessels could reach. Petersburg grew into a commercial center for processing and transporting cotton, tobacco, and metal goods. Additionally, as transportation evolved, Petersburg became an important railroad center, continuing to process products from southside Virginia and distribute them to external markets.

After World War II, however, the rail transportation business took a downturn. This, coupled with the siltation of the harbor, caused the city to become a "forgotten" city. Prosperity bypassed the city and headed to other nearby communities. The city and its residents—mostly minority (72 percent African American) and low income (20 percent live below the poverty level)—are suffering the effects of suburban sprawl, the loss of deep water access, and the loss of an industrial and manufacturing base. The Pilot will focus on three city-owned brownfields (the former Titmus Optical Site and adjacent properties on Commerce Street, the Seward Luggage site adjacent to High Street, and sites along the Appomattox River

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Petersburg, VA

Date of Announcement:
May 2000

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The City of Petersburg targets three publicly owned brownfields, including sites along the Appomattox River associated with the waterfront revitalization initiative.

Contacts:

Office of Economic Development City of Petersburg, Virginia (804) 733-2329	Regional Brownfields Team U.S. EPA - Region 3 (215) 566-3129
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Visit the EPA Region 3 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/reg3hwmd/brownfld/hmpage1.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

associated with present harbor dredging and the waterfront revitalization initiative) to address environmental and public health concerns that are hindering the city's livability and economic vitality.

OBJECTIVES

The City of Petersburg will focus its efforts on recycling existing industrial properties. This will reduce pressures to sell undeveloped greenspace for short-term gain without having considered a project's long-term compatibility with the goals of Petersburg. In addition, the Pilot efforts combined with the overall community revitalization strategy seek to spur social and economic growth in the city center. Through the Pilot, Petersburg will develop a sustainable model for cleanup and redevelopment that can be utilized throughout the city by private property owners to recycle their properties.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Assessing, identifying, characterizing, and developing cleanup plans at city-owned properties in the targeted area;
- Creating a forum for expanded and interactive community involvement relating to the targeted brownfields; and
- Developing an inventory and conducting assessments at privately owned brownfields.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.